

As former senior national security officials from both Democratic and Republican administrations, we urge the Senate to swiftly confirm the national security Cabinet nominees put forth by President-elect Biden. Alejandro Mayorkas, Antony Blinken, Avril Haines, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Lloyd Austin represent the best of America: our patriotism, our diversity, our commitment to excellence, and our values. Our nation needs these highly qualified and experienced officials in office and ready to serve on day one of the Biden-Harris administration.

America's allies and adversaries alike are closely watching this period of transition between administrations. Given the many challenges facing the country, the smooth transfer of power in departments and agencies that are essential for national security is critical. As Republicans and Democrats, we should come together and empower these qualified leaders to assume their critical new responsibilities.

Many of us have been privileged to work with these nominees in the past, and we are proud to affirm that President-elect Biden has chosen an outstanding team to help him execute his foreign policy strategy. A President must be able to trust that his Cabinet will provide wise counsel and candid, strategic guidance. With this slate of national security leaders, President-elect Biden has surrounded himself with seasoned experts who have demonstrated their commitment to defending America's ideals and interests. We urge the Senate to continue the long-standing bipartisan tradition of confirming the President-elect's national security team on day one.

Signed,

*Madeleine K. Albright*

*Former Secretary of State (1997-2001)*

*Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. (1993-1997)*

*Hillary Rodham Clinton*

*Former Secretary of State (2009-2013)*

*William J. Perry*

*Former Secretary of Defense (1994-1997)*

*William S. Cohen*

*Former Secretary of Defense (1997-2001)*

*Leon E. Panetta*

*Former Secretary of Defense (2011-2013)*

*Former Director of the CIA (2009-2011)*

*Charles T. Hagel*

*Former Secretary of Defense (2013-2015)*

*Ash Carter*

*Former Secretary of Defense (2015-2017)*

*Tom J. Ridge*

*Former Secretary of Homeland Security (2003-2005)*

*Michael Chertoff*

*Former Secretary of Homeland Security (2005-2009)*

*Janet Napolitano*

*Former Secretary of Homeland Security (2009-2013)*

*Jeh C. Johnson*

*Former Secretary of Homeland Security (2013-2017)*

*James R. Clapper*

*Former Director of National Intelligence (2010-2017)*

*Thomas R. Pickering*

*Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. (1989-1992)*

*Governor Bill Richardson*

*Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. (1997-1998)*

*Former Secretary of Energy (1998-2001)*

*George J. Tenet*

*Former Director of Central Intelligence (1996-2004)*

*John E. McLaughlin*

*Former Director of the CIA (2004)*

*Michael Hayden*

*Former Director of the CIA (2006-2009)*

*Former Director of the NSA (1999-2005)*

*Michael Morell*

*Former Director of the CIA (2011, 2012-2013)*

*John Brennan*

*Former Director of the CIA (2013-2017)*